

Message Text

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16

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 IO-10

AID-05 EB-07 OMB-01 /089 W

----- 126752

R 190700Z JUL 75

FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0510

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMCONSUL KARACHI

UNCLAS LAHORE 0840

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, PK

SUBJ: SEASONAL FLOODING AROUND LAHORE

REF: LAHORE 834, ISLAMABAD 6604

1. SINCE, FORTUNATELY, RELATIVELY LITTLE RAIN FELL IN NORTHEASTERN DISTRICTS OF PUNJAB DURING 48 HOURS FOLLOWING JULY 16 (REF LAHORE 834), SWOLLEN CHENAB AND JHELM RIVERS LOWERED, AND RUNOFF FROM INUNDATED LANDS PROCEEDED NORMALLY. E.G., FLOW AT ENDANGERED MARALA HEADWORKS ON UPPER CHENAB DECLINED FROM HIGH OF 507,800 CUSECS LATE JULY 16 TO MERE 128,200 BY MIDDAY JULY 18, AND "BULGE" AT KHANKI AND QADIRABAD WORKS DOWNSTREAM ALSO FELL.

2. EXCEPTION WAS RAVI RIVER WHICH PASSES LAHORE. DUE TO DELAYED ACTION OF WATERS REACHING PAKISTAN TERRITORY FROM CATCHMENT AREAS IN INDIA, RAVI ROSE MORE SLOWLY THAN CHENAB. (RAVI ALSO HAS MUCH LOWER CAPACITY THAN CHENAB AND FLOODS MORE EASILY.) REPORTS OF MOUNTING FLOW AT JASSAR (WHERE RAVI ENTERS PAKISTAN FROM INDIA) EARLY JULY 18 CAUSED ALERT ALONG RIVER, ESPECIALLY ON NORTHERN FRINGES OF LAHORE, WITH PWD STRENGTHENING MARGINAL BUNDS AND ARMY STANDING BY TO PROVIDE RELIEF.

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3. DANGER POINT WAS REACHED EVENING JULY 18 WHEN FLOW AT RAVI

BRIDGE AT SHAHDARA OUTSIDE LAHORE MEASURED 185,000 CUSECS (187,000 CUSECS WAS HIGHEST RECORDED DURING DISASTEROUS 1973 FLOODS). AT THAT POINT RIGHT BANK BUND (OPPOSITE LAHORE) BROKE, CAUSING LIMITED DIVERSION DOWN OLD BED OF RAVI AND TAKING PRESSURE OFF SHAHDARA AND LAHORE. SOME HAMLETS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED ALONG BOTH BANKS OF RIVER AND LOCALIZED CROP DAMAGE SUSTAINED, BUT EFFECTIVE WARNING AND RESCUE EFFORTS PREVENTED LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE AND CATTLE.

4. ON REKKY BY CAR THIS MORNING I OBSERVED FLOODWATER RECEDING FROM LAHORE'S PROTECTIVE BUND WHERE WATER HAD RISEN TO WITHIN THREE FEET OF TOP. ON SHAHDARA SIDE, WATER WAS STILL FLOWING ACROSS MAIN GT ROAD IN DIRECTION OF SHEIKHUPURA, ALTHOUGH HIGHWAY AND RAILROAD TRAFFIC NORTH HAD RESUMED.

5. LAHORE APPEARS TO HAVE HAD RATHER CLOSE CALL, BUT DANGER HAS PASSED FOR NOW. WILL REPORT OFFICIAL ASSESSMENTS OF PROPERTY AND CROP DAMAGE FROM THIS SEASONAL PUNJAB FLOODING WHEN AVAILABLE.

SPENGLER

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